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## What is the U.S. Drought Monitor?

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# What <sup>is</sup> the U.S. Drought Monitor?

The U.S. Drought Monitor (USDM) is a map released every Thursday, showing parts of the U.S. that are in drought. The map uses five classifications: abnormally dry (D0), showing areas that may be going into or are coming out of drought, and four levels of drought: moderate (D1), severe (D2), extreme (D3) and exceptional (D4). It is produced jointly by the National Drought Mitigation Center (NDMC) at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).



## The USDA uses the map as a trigger for programs that help agricultural producers recover from drought and other natural disasters:

### Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP)

LFP provides compensation to eligible livestock owners and contract growers who are also grazed forage producers who have suffered grazing losses for covered livestock on land that is native or improved pastureland with permanent vegetative cover or is planted specifically for grazing due to a qualifying drought condition during the normal grazing period for the county.

[www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/disaster-assistance-program/livestock-forage/index](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/disaster-assistance-program/livestock-forage/index)

### Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm Raised Fish Program (ELAP)

ELAP pays for the additional cost of transporting water to livestock in any area of the county that has been rated by the U.S. Drought Monitor as having a D3 (extreme drought) intensity that directly impacts water availability at any time during the normal grazing period. Assistance is also available to honeybee producers for additional feed loss in counties rated as D3 on the drought monitor. Drought is not an ELAP-eligible loss condition for livestock feed and grazing losses.

[www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/disaster-assistance-program/emergency-assist-for-livestock-honey-bees-fish/index](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/disaster-assistance-program/emergency-assist-for-livestock-honey-bees-fish/index)

### Fast-Track Secretarial Disaster Declarations

Expedited process for Secretarial disaster designations developed for severe drought, completed by the national Farm Service Agency Office. It is based on the U.S. Drought Monitor and provides low-interest emergency loans.

[www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/disaster-assistance-program/disaster-designation-information/index](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/disaster-assistance-program/disaster-designation-information/index)

### Emergency Loans Program

Available to producers with agriculture operations located in a county under a primary or contiguous Secretarial disaster designation. These low-interest loans help producers recover from production and physical losses.

[www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/conservation-programs/conservation-reserve-program/emergency-haying-and-grazing/index](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/conservation-programs/conservation-reserve-program/emergency-haying-and-grazing/index)



## Other USDA FSA Drought Recovery Assistance Programs



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**Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)** – pays covered producers of covered non-insurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory, or prevented planting occur due to natural disasters (includes native grass for grazing). Eligible producers must have purchased NAP coverage for the current crop year.

[www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/disaster-assistance-program/noninsured-crop-disaster-assistance/index](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/disaster-assistance-program/noninsured-crop-disaster-assistance/index)

**Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)** – pays eligible livestock owners or contract growers for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality, or reduced sale prices for injured livestock, caused by adverse weather. Eligible losses may include those determined by FSA to have been caused by hurricanes, floods, blizzards, wildfires, tropical storms, tornadoes, lightning, extreme heat, and extreme cold, or disease resulting from adverse weather. Owners or contract growers must provide documentation of inventory and death losses resulting from an eligible adverse weather event, or livestock sold at a reduced price, and must submit a notice of loss to their local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss of livestock is apparent.

[www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/disaster-assistance-program/livestock-indemnity/index](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/disaster-assistance-program/livestock-indemnity/index)

### Emergency Haying & Grazing – Conservation Reserve Program

**(CRP)** – provides for haying and grazing on certain CRP practices in counties suffering from a 40 percent or greater loss in normal precipitation for the four most recent months and a 40 percent or greater loss in normal hay and pasture production, or when a county is designated as D2 or higher on the drought monitor.

[www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/conservation-programs/emergency-conservation/index](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/conservation-programs/emergency-conservation/index)

**Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)** – helps farmers and ranchers to repair damage to farmlands caused by natural disasters and put in pipes, pumps or other infrastructure for water conservation during severe drought. ECP provides funding and assistance to repair the damaged farmland or to install infrastructure for water conservation. Drought emergency measures provide for water conservation and enhancement to: permit grazing of range, pasture, or forage by livestock; supply emergency water for existing irrigation systems serving orchards and vineyards; provide emergency water for confined livestock operations.

[www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/conservation-programs/emergency-conservation/index](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/conservation-programs/emergency-conservation/index)

**Tree Assistance Program (TAP)** – helps eligible orchardists and tree growers for qualifying tree, shrub and vine mortality losses in excess of normal mortality due to natural disaster.

[www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/disaster-assistance-program/tree-assistance-program/index](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/disaster-assistance-program/tree-assistance-program/index)

## USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Drought Recovery Assistance Programs

**Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)** – provides agricultural producers with financial resources and one-on-one help to plan and implement improvements on the land. While not established specifically for disaster response, the program can assist with immediate recovery needs and provide long-term support to help conserve water resources, reduce wind erosion on drought-impacted fields, improve livestock access to water, recover from natural disasters like wildfires, and more.

[www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/eqip](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/eqip)

**Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program** – helps communities address watershed impairments due to drought and other natural occurrences. This funding will help drought-ravaged communities and private landowners address watershed impairments, such as stabilizing stream banks and replanting upland sites stripped of vegetation.

[www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/conservation-programs/conservation-reserve-program/emergency-haying-and-grazing/index](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/conservation-programs/conservation-reserve-program/emergency-haying-and-grazing/index)

## USDA Risk Management Agency Insurance Programs

**Crop Insurance** – Crop insurance provides indemnity payments to growers who purchase crop insurance for production and quality losses related to drought and other weather hazards, including losses caused by inability to plant on time. The crop insurance safety net is one method producers employ to mitigate their risk.

**USDA Farm Service Agency** – [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov)

**USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service** – [www.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov)

**USDA Risk Management Agency** – [www.rma.usda.gov](http://www.rma.usda.gov)

### Resources:

**USDA Climate Hubs** – [www.climatehubs.usda.gov](http://www.climatehubs.usda.gov)

**Farmers.gov/Recover** – aids in determining which Farm Service Agency (FSA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and/or Risk Management Agency (RMA) programs are available to help producers prepare, recover from and build long-term resilience to natural disasters. [www.farmers.gov/recover](http://www.farmers.gov/recover)

**USDA Disaster Resource Center** – provides information about specific disasters and emergencies and connects with state and local help. [www.usda.gov/topics/disaster](http://www.usda.gov/topics/disaster)

**Farmers.gov Service Locator** – to find the closest USDA Service Center. [www.farmers.gov/service-center-locator](http://www.farmers.gov/service-center-locator)

**HayNet** – is an Internet-based Hay and Grazing Net Ad Service allowing farmers and ranchers to share ‘Need Hay’ ads and ‘Have Hay’ ads online. Farmers also can use another feature to post advertisements for grazing land, specifically ads announcing the availability of grazing land or ads requesting a need for land to graze. [www.fsa.usda.gov/online-services/haynet-tipnet/index](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/online-services/haynet-tipnet/index)

### Learn more about the U.S. Drought Monitor

**U.S. Drought Monitor:** [droughtmonitor.unl.edu](http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu)

**What is the U.S. Drought Monitor?**  
[droughtmonitor.unl.edu/AboutUSDM/WhatIsTheUSDM.aspx](http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/AboutUSDM/WhatIsTheUSDM.aspx)

**U.S. Drought Monitor Tutorial:** [droughtmonitortutorial.org](http://droughtmonitortutorial.org)